

University of New Orleans
ScholarWorks@UNO

University of New Orleans Theses and
Dissertations

Dissertations and Theses

Spring 5-15-2015

Becoming Number Six

Ross Peter Nelson

University of New Orleans, ross@gorgonzola.org

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td>



Part of the [Playwriting Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Nelson, Ross Peter, "Becoming Number Six" (2015). *University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations*. 1983.

<https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td/1983>

This Thesis is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by ScholarWorks@UNO with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Thesis in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UNO. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uno.edu.

Becoming Number Six

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts
in
Creative Writing
Playwriting

by

Ross Peter Nelson

B.S. Montana State University, 1979

May 2015

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the faculty and students of the CWW who were so helpful and supportive during my time here. I'd like to particularly credit Rick Barton and Neal Walsh for maintaining the program in the face of all the challenges they are forced to deal with. I'm especially grateful to Justin Maxwell, for hitting the ground running and being so supportive as we both arrived in a new city. Thanks also to Henry Griffin and Shelby Richardson for devoting the extra time required to serve on my committee.

I also wish to thank the New Orleans theatre community for their support for new work, especially Jes Podewell at Southern Rep, Richard Mayer at the Old Marquis, and the Elm Theatre ensemble.

I'd like to recognize my parents, Robert and Ardell Nelson, for not blinking an eye when I expressed my desire to give up a financially rewarding career for a return to college life and considerable further uncertainty. Finally, I want to express my gratitude to all the friends who supported me in my quest for an MFA. Their encouragement, time, and general good nature is greatly appreciated. It would have been nearly impossible to do this without the help I got from Cate Nelson and Jane Bavelas, and I treasure those who were always willing to read a new script and give me feedback, especially Jenny Hollingworth.

Abstract

Becoming Number Six is an original dramatic work: Stephanie Dylar is disturbed when two shadowy figures claiming to be intelligence agents appear on her doorstep. The agents, Lovelace and Babbage, represent a government branch known as The Division, and inform her that her son Jeremy may be involved in illegal computer activity. When Jeremy subsequently goes missing, Stephanie turns to her friend Julia for help, and is confronted with the realities of constant surveillance as Julia brings the hacking group Incognito into the mix.

Drama, NSA, Surveillance, Hacking, Anonymous

BECOMING NUMBER SIX



Ross Peter Nelson

CHARACTERS

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| STEPHANIE DYLAR | Female. Late-30s. Widowed single mom (aka Indirect Object). A elementary school teacher. |
| JEREMY DYLAR | Male. Just turned 18. A high school senior, STEPHANIE's son (aka <InflatableVonnegut>). |
| BABBAGE | Male. 30s. An agent of The Division. His look is white shirt, dark suit, very Men In Black. |
| LOVELACE | Female. 30s. An agent of The Division (aka <RainbowGirl84>, Number Nine). Also dressed in black suit and white blouse, but manages to look chic. |
| JULIA | Female. Late-30s. Friend of STEPHANIE (aka Subject, <TinkerTailor>, <NerdyButCute>). IT worker. |
| NUMBER 4 | Any gender. Late-40s. Director general of The Division. |

SETTING

Suburban USA.

TIME

Now.

NOTES

JULIA should be seated in the audience as the play begins.

Names inside angle brackets indicate IRC handles or internet aliases. They are pronounced as if they are ordinary phrases, e.g., <FreshMeat> is pronounced "fresh meat."

Three cell phones (referred to in the text as CELL PHONE #1, #2, and #3) should be planted in the audience so the ringing feels real. Can be simulated with sound cues if this is not possible.

The audience should be aware of surveillance before, after, and during the performance. Video or still cameras operating at the entrance, the bar or concession stand, and the ticket booth will contribute to this effect. If possible, live feed from those cameras can then be replayed on NUMBER 4's monitors in the first and final scenes.

The program for the performance should carry the following disclaimer: *Photographs, video, and audio of the audience will be captured during the course of this performance. After the performance, all such information will be discarded. Theoretically.*

SCENE 1

(Split stage: one side is dominated by a large desk, the Division Seal, and a freestanding door upstage. This is NUMBER 4's office.)

Also on stage, separate from NUMBER 4's office, sits JEREMY. JEREMY sits and types on his laptop, he is lit only by the blue light of the screen reflecting back on his face. A school backpack lies next to him. He is in his room, but there are no set items to indicate this.

Lights up on NUMBER 4, sitting at the desk downstage center, back to the audience. There is a computer and a complex phone on the desk. There are several video monitors above the desk that he/she is watching, showing surveillance photos or video (preferably of the current audience).

After watching for a time, presumably long enough for audience members to realize they are on the display, NUMBER 4 attends a list of names scrolling on one of the monitors. S/He picks up the phone receiver and punches a button on the keyboard. CELL PHONE #1 rings.)

NUMBER 4

I see that all but three of you are carrying cell phones.

(NUMBER 4 types. CELL PHONE #1 stops. CELL PHONE #2 begins to ring.)

NUMBER 4

Several of you have neglected to turn them off.

(NUMBER 4 types again. CELL PHONE #2 stops.)

NUMBER 4

Your phones are constantly sending information: location, signal strength, on or off, caller id, text messages, internet addresses. They send out names, searching for the wifi networks they remember. I see we have several Starbucks customers. Oh, this one's good, "Hotspot in my pants." I bet your next door neighbors get a kick out of that.

(NUMBER 4 rises and faces the audience.)

NUMBER 4

You're here to watch aren't you? There's nothing wrong with that, I'm a watcher myself. But are you a passive watcher, or an active watcher?

Becoming Number Six

(Lights up on JEREMY, who digs a cell phone from his pack.)

NUMBER 4 (*cont*)

What have you learned by watching? Jeremy Dylar has observed that the shape and thickness of eyebrows is a significant characteristic in distinguishing gender.

JEREMY

C'mon. Pick up. ... Ethan! Oh, crap. ... Dude. The files I liberated just showed up on WikiLeaks. I'm official. Call me.

NUMBER 4

He's just an amateur, of course. But with some gentle nudging, he could be a professional.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE enter through the lobby, and walk down the aisle towards the stage.)

LOVELACE

My question is, why bother?

BABBAGE

Number Four wants it shut down.

LOVELACE

We'll never shut it down completely. He knows that.

BABBAGE

Scare them off for a while.

LOVELACE

It leaves us with the evolution problem.

BABBAGE

Hackers evolve?

LOVELACE

Better antibiotics breed better bacteria.

BABBAGE

And you'd rather just watch?

LOVELACE

If they don't know that we know, they'll get sloppy.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE reach the stage, and knock on the door to NUMBER 4's office.)

STEPHANIE (*offstage*)

Jeremy, you'll be late for school.

Becoming Number Six

NUMBER 4

Enter.

JEREMY

(To himself) Shit! *(Loudly)* Ok, mom.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE open the door. All freeze, as lights dim except for a spot on JEREMY. He grabs a backpack and begins to run off, then turns to the audience.)

JEREMY

Every move you make, every step you take, they'll be watching you. It's kind of a rush.

(JEREMY exits. Lights back up on NUMBER 4's office and BABBAGE and LOVELACE enter.)

BABBAGE / LOVELACE

Number Four.

NUMBER 4

Anything interesting?

BABBAGE

(Pointing into the audience.)

One lady was texting.

LOVELACE

(Also points.)

And one guy with earbuds.

(NUMBER 4 sits at the computer and types. The screens change to scrolling lists.)

NUMBER 4

Lets check those texts. All SMSes from the nearest cell tower are from 703-482-0623 to 301-688-6524, belonging to a Mr. Eric Blair. Communications between those two numbers had never occurred before last Friday. First contact via the app Tinder.

(NUMBER 4 stands and addresses someone in the audience.)

Miss 703, on the off chance that Mr. Blair did not mention this, he's married and has an eight year old daughter. *(Turns back.)* Ready to begin Operation Triangulate?

BABBAGE

Yes.

LOVELACE

One question though.

Becoming Number Six

NUMBER 4

Shoot.

BABBAGE

We were wondering --

LOVELACE

Why <LeakyFaucet> is a priority?

BABBAGE

Why not continue to simply monitor?

NUMBER 4

Embassy pressure. The German chancellor will be visiting next month. They don't want any further embarrassments.

LOVELACE

That was GCHQ, not us.

BABBAGE

None of the German data anyway.

NUMBER 4

I know. But if we disrupt <LeakyFaucet> now, they'll be off-line while the chancellor is here. Anything else?

LOVELACE

No.

NUMBER 4

Off you go.

BABBAGE / LOVELACE

Number Four.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE exit. NUMBER 4 types on the computer again. One of the three screens begins to play a porn video. The stage goes dark.)

END OF SCENE

SCENE 2

(Again, a nearly bare stage. The free-standing doorway is moved to one side, now representing the door to the Dylar house. "Inside" the house is a sofa and a coffee table. "Outside" the house is a streetlight on which is mounted a CCTV camera. From time to time, it swivels, zooms, and pans, making an unobtrusive sound.

BABBAGE and LOVELACE appear at the doorway and ring the bell. STEPHANIE answers. When BABBAGE and LOVELACE speak, their sentences run together as though they were a single person.)

| | |
|--|-----------|
| | BABBAGE |
| Mrs. Dylar? | |
| | STEPHANIE |
| Yes? | |
| | BABBAGE |
| Do you have a moment? | |
| | LOVELACE |
| It's about your son – | |
| | BABBAGE |
| Jeremy. | |
| | STEPHANIE |
| Has something happened? Is he all right? | |
| | LOVELACE |
| He's all right, – | |
| | BABBAGE |
| Nothing's happened – | |
| | LOVELACE |
| Yet. | |
| | STEPHANIE |
| What do you mean, yet? | |
| | BABBAGE |
| That's why we're here. | |
| | LOVELACE |
| There are patterns – | |

Becoming Number Six

BABBAGE

Patterns of behavior, --

LOVELACE

Disturbing patterns.

STEPHANIE

Who are you?

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE exchange a look.)

BABBAGE

We work for the government.

STEPHANIE

What part?

(LOVELACE makes a triangle in front of her left eye using the thumb and forefinger of both hands.)

LOVELACE

Illuminati. One world government.

BABBAGE

She's joking.

LOVELACE

Your government.

BABBAGE

A division --

LOVELACE

The Division.

BABBAGE

We keep an eye on things.

STEPHANIE

What things? Who are you? Can I see some ID?

BABBAGE

Mrs. Dylar, you'd need a security clearance --

LOVELACE

Level Three --

BABBAGE

Whiskey --

Becoming Number Six

Foxtrot –
LOVELACE

Victor –
BABBAGE

LOVELACE
(*For BABBAGE's ear only.*) What's our vector, Victor?

(*BABBAGE and LOVELACE exchange a smirk.*)

To see our ID cards.
BABBAGE

Have you done something to my son?
STEPHANIE

No ma'am –
LOVELACE

We're strictly intelligence.
BABBAGE

Surveillance.
LOVELACE

Data management. But –
BABBAGE

There are patterns –
LOVELACE

Patterns of behavior, –
BABBAGE

Disturbing patterns.
LOVELACE

I don't understand. Are you threatening me?
STEPHANIE

(*BABBAGE and LOVELACE exchange a look.*)

No ma'am –
LOVELACE

Not at all –
BABBAGE

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

We want to help.

STEPHANIE

But who are you? And what does this have to do with Jeremy?

BABBAGE

You can call me Babbage.

LOVELACE

Lovelace. *(Beat)* Not that one.

BABBAGE

We can be identified by those –

LOVELACE / BABBAGE *(together)*

(They exchange a glance.) Handles –

BABBAGE

For the duration.

STEPHANIE

But if you're from the government –

LOVELACE

The Division.

STEPHANIE

-- you must have some identification.

LOVELACE

As we said –

BABBAGE

You don't have clearance.

STEPHANIE

I'm sorry, I don't know who you are, and without some ID, I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

LOVELACE

Mrs. Dylar –

BABBAGE

Up to this point, your records have been immaculate –

LOVELACE

Pristine –

Becoming Number Six

BABBAGE

Surely –

LOVELACE

(To BABBAGE.) Don't call me Shirley.

(They exchange a smirk.)

BABBAGE

You wouldn't want them tarnished.

LOVELACE

To have your profile flagged as “uncooperative.”

STEPHANIE

If you don't leave, I'm going to call the police.

LOVELACE

I believe they're going to call you.

*(NUMBER 4 enters an unused portion of the stage, holding a phone.
STEPHANIE's cell phone rings.)*

BABBAGE

We'll wait.

*(STEPHANIE closes the door, takes her phone from her pocket, and
answers.)*

STEPHANIE

Hello?

NUMBER 4

Mrs. Dylar?

STEPHANIE

This is she.

NUMBER 4

I'm calling on behalf of the sheriff's office. Two officers will be arriving soon.

STEPHANIE

They've already—

NUMBER 4

I trust you will cooperate fully with their requests.

STEPHANIE

I understand, but can you –

Becoming Number Six

NUMBER 4

They will identify themselves as Babbage and Lovelace.

STEPHANIE

Babbage and Lovelace, yes, but –

NUMBER 4

This is a matter of national security.

STEPHANIE

But how do I know –

NUMBER 4

They will brief you on everything you need to know. Is that clear?

STEPHANIE

Yes, I see.

NUMBER 4

Good day, Mrs. Dylar.

STEPHANIE

Good-bye.

(NUMBER 4 exits. STEPHANIE cracks the door open to see if BABBAGE and LOVELACE are still there. She resigns herself to opening the door fully.)

STEPHANIE

Will you tell me what this is all about?

LOVELACE

May we come in?

(STEPHANIE, still reluctant, opens the door. The two agents enter. As STEPHANIE closes the door behind them, the CCTV camera swivels. The agents sit on the sofa, and STEPHANIE fetches a chair for herself.)

BABBAGE

Your son –

STEPHANIE

Jeremy –

BABBAGE

Has recently begun to use software –

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE
that encrypts his internet communication –

BABBAGE
Email, chat, even –

LOVELACE
Disturbingly –

BABBAGE
His web browsing.

STEPHANIE
You’ve been spying on my son?

LOVELACE
No.

BABBAGE
The Division doesn’t spy.

STEPHANIE
Then how –

BABBAGE
Traffic analysis.

LOVELACE
Pattern recognition.

STEPHANIE
I don’t understand.

BABBAGE
We don’t read email –

LOVELACE
We read patterns.

BABBAGE
Say you send an email to your mother --

LOVELACE
Every Saturday.

STEPHANIE
My mother!

Becoming Number Six

If you suddenly stopped, –
LOVELACE

We'd know something was wrong.
BABBAGE

Perhaps you'd had a fight –
LOVELACE

Or had taken sick.
BABBAGE

The mere fact that something has changed is –
LOVELACE

Significant.
BABBAGE

How do you know I'm emailing my mother?
STEPHANIE

We don't.
BABBAGE

Theoretically.
LOVELACE

Though in your case we do.
BABBAGE

Email is just like a ordinary letter.
LOVELACE

For the letter carrier to deliver it –
BABBAGE

LOVELACE
(*Sings softly.*) Please Mr. Postman, look
and see.

BABBAGE
The delivery address must be visible.

LOVELACE
Every piece of data transmitted over the internet –

BABBAGE
Has a destination address and a return address.

Becoming Number Six

So anyone can see what I'm doing?

STEPHANIE

Not anyone. No.

LOVELACE

But you can.

STEPHANIE

Theoretically.

BABBAGE

So you've tapped into my son's computer and are –

STEPHANIE

Oh, no.

BABBAGE

That would be illegal.

LOVELACE

Unless we had a warrant.

BABBAGE

Which we don't.

LOVELACE

We work for the government, --

BABBAGE

We're bound by the law.

LOVELACE

Then how do you know whatever it is about my son?

STEPHANIE

Wiretapping your son requires a warrant –

BABBAGE

Placing a node on the internet backbone does not.

LOVELACE

Our computers don't eavesdrop on individuals --

BABBAGE

We analyze the entire network.

LOVELACE

Becoming Number Six

STEPHANIE

You're telling me it's illegal to spy on a single person but it's OK to spy on everybody?

BABBAGE

We're not spies.

LOVELACE

Other agencies spy:

BABBAGE

FBI, CIA, DIA, DCS, JIO, NSA --

LOVELACE

(To BABBAGE.) No. Such. Agency.

(They share a smirk.)

STEPHANIE

But you said --

LOVELACE

We do traffic analysis, --

BABBAGE

Pattern recognition.

STEPHANIE

That doesn't make sense. If you don't read his email, how do you know he's started encoding it?

BABBAGE

Our processors classify the data, --

LOVELACE

Text, voice, video, audio, image, --

BABBAGE

But no one actually listens to the audio, --

LOVELACE

Or reads the text --

BABBAGE

Or looks at the pictures.

LOVELACE

Theoretically.

BABBAGE

We deal in metadata, --

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE
Data about data.

STEPHANIE
What do you want?

LOVELACE
We just thought you ought to know.

STEPHANIE
Know what?

BABBAGE
About your son –

LOVELACE
Encrypting his communications.

STEPHANIE
Am I supposed to do something?

BABBAGE
That's up to you.

LOVELACE
Think of us like a neighbor –

BABBAGE
Who notices a suspicious car on your block.

LOVELACE
It might be significant --

BABBAGE
Or not.

LOVELACE
He's coming.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE stand.)

STEPHANIE
Jeremy?

(She stands as well.)

BABBAGE
It is important –

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

Essential –

BABBAGE

That you do not tell Jeremy about our visit.

LOVELACE

Do you understand?

STEPHANIE

I guess.

BABBAGE

Do you understand?

STEPHANIE

Yes.

LOVELACE

Goodbye, Mrs. Dylar.

STEPHANIE

Goodbye.

LOVELACE

Be seeing you.

*(BABBAGE and LOVELACE exit. The CCTV swivels to track them.
JEREMY enters a few moments later.)*

JEREMY

Hi, mom. Who was here?

STEPHANIE

Jehovah's Witnesses.

JEREMY

Oh.

(JEREMY disappears into his bedroom.)

STEPHANIE

Jeremy?

JEREMY *(offstage)*

What?

STEPHANIE

I don't want you on your computer all day. Do something outside for a change.

Becoming Number Six

I've got stuff to do.

JEREMY (*offstage*)

Like what?

STEPHANIE

Stuff.

JEREMY (*offstage*)

Unless it's homework, I want you outside.

STEPHANIE

(JEREMY enters.)

Is something wrong?

JEREMY

No. Everything's fine.

STEPHANIE

Ok. I do have homework, though.

JEREMY

Fine.

STEPHANIE

(JEREMY exits again. After he leaves, STEPHANIE finds her cell phone and dials. JULIA's phone rings. She answers from her position in the audience.)

Shit! Sorry. ... Steph?

JULIA

Julia, can you come over right now?

STEPHANIE

I can't talk now. I'm –

JULIA

Please. I need you.

STEPHANIE

Ok. Ok. Let me call you back.

JULIA

Becoming Number Six

(JULIA hangs up and leaves her seat, excusing herself to her seat-mates. Lights dim on Dylar home as JULIA walks down the aisle. Spotlight on JULIA as she reaches the stage.)

JULIA

I'm not someone who can just stand around and watch. I have to do something.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 3

(A short time later. Split stage: BABBAGE and LOVELACE are seated outdoors at a coffee shop, simply suggested by a round table and two chairs. LOVELACE checks her cell phone. In the Dylar living room. JULIA and STEPHANIE are seated on the sofa. JULIA hugs STEPHANIE, who is upset. NOTE: The actors in the split scene should speak between one another's lines, rather than overlapping.)

STEPHANIE

It was so creepy. And I didn't dare say anything or do anything when Jeremy was home.

JULIA

Where is he now?

STEPHANIE

At a friend's.

JULIA

I still don't understand why you can't call the police.

STEPHANIE

The sheriff called me! While those two were in the house.

JULIA

You don't know who they are, or who they're working for?

STEPHANIE

No.

JULIA

Can you verify what they said?

STEPHANIE

What do you mean?

JULIA

BABBAGE

How long do you think it will be?

LOVELACE

Before we finish our coffee, I bet.

BABBAGE

And you think it will be her?

LOVELACE

Facebook friends forever.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE sip their coffee.)

Becoming Number Six

Have you looked at Jeremy's computer? Is he using encryption software?

STEPHANIE

That's why I called you. I don't have any idea what to look for.

JULIA

Tor, SSH, PGP, things like that.

STEPHANIE

I don't know what those are.

JULIA

Tor is a web browser that anonymizes –

STEPHANIE

Just go look.

JULIA

Now? What if he comes back?

STEPHANIE

OK, tomorrow morning, when he's at school. It's perfect. I'll call in sick and you can come over –

JULIA

Whoa, whoa. Slow down. Have you thought about this?

STEPHANIE

I haven't thought about anything else.

JULIA

But have you thought about what this means?

STEPHANIE

What does it mean?

JULIA

Are you ready to snoop on your son?

STEPHANIE

I don't have any choice.

BABBAGE

I heard you wrote a computer program.

JULIA

Sure you do; if these spooks are so concerned, let them get a warrant and do it themselves.

STEPHANIE

But then it might be too late. What if he's doing something illegal?

JULIA

You're still invading his privacy.

STEPHANIE

I'm his mother. Don't I have a right to know?

JULIA

Has he done anything suspicious?

STEPHANIE

They obviously thought so.

JULIA

Shouldn't there at least be some evidence before –

STEPHANIE

What about my responsibilities? I can't be one of those parents they interview on TV who says, "I didn't know anything was wrong."

JULIA

Steph, I'm just not comfortable –

STEPHANIE

You're not a parent, and you'll never be one. You don't understand.

JULIA

LOVELACE

I like to keep my hand in.

BABBAGE

The Freedom of Information Act?

LOVELACE

A joke.

BABBAGE

That's not what I heard.

LOVELACE

What did you hear?

BABBAGE

It's going into production.

LOVELACE

Right.

Becoming Number Six

Thanks a lot.

STEPHANIE

Sorry, I'm just upset. ... I didn't think you wanted kids.

JULIA

Not sure. Maybe if I met the right girl.

STEPHANIE

Are you dating again?

JULIA

Looking, anyway.

STEPHANIE

Good for you.

JULIA

I'm just saying, it's possible.

STEPHANIE

So will you help me?

JULIA

I'll do this because you're my friend, not because I think it's a good idea.

(STEPHANIE gives JULIA a big hug.)

STEPHANIE

Thank you. This means so much to me.

BABBAGE

Why did you call it a joke?

LOVELACE

Because it was. Someone was bitching about the amount of work required to do an FOIA when it would all be censored anyway.

BABBAGE

Division policy. Never release any data.

LOVELACE

And yet we have the researchers on staff.

BABBAGE

It shows good faith.

LOVELACE

Anyway, I wrote her a program to generate random text.

BABBAGE

I don't see the point.

LOVELACE

It is then censored as if it were actual data.

BABBAGE

Brilliant.

JULIA

But like I said, you need to be prepared for what you might find.

STEPHANIE

I'd rather see him spend time in jail than be killed by a SWAT team.

JULIA

I don't mean that. I mean, what if you see things you'd rather not?

STEPHANIE

What do you mean?

JULIA

If you start searching through his computer ... He's eighteen you know.

STEPHANIE

Oh. You mean like ... pictures.

JULIA

Porn is pretty much a given.

STEPHANIE

You think?

JULIA

What planet do you live on?

STEPHANIE

I don't know! I deal with first graders all day, I don't know how to think about that sort of thing.

JULIA

What if there are pictures of him?

STEPHANIE

You mean ... sexual?

JULIA

That. Or evidence of drugs or whatever.

Becoming Number Six

(JULIA's cell phone rings. She looks at it but doesn't answer.)

JULIA

I have to get to work.

STEPHANIE

OK. I get it.

JULIA

So, maybe you don't want to do this after all?

STEPHANIE

I have to. To protect him.

JULIA

Just warning you.

STEPHANIE

You look at everything.

JULIA

Oh, no.

STEPHANIE

Yes! You can just tell me if there's anything I need to know.

JULIA

No, no, no. I'm not going to be the villain here.

STEPHANIE

You're not a villain, you're just a filter. You can look at those things without being emotionally involved. You can look for patterns that I'm missing.

JULIA

But where's the line? Do I tell you if I find out he's using heroin, but not if he's smoking weed?

(LOVELACE gets a text. She checks her phone.)

LOVELACE

Contact confirmed.

BABBAGE

Congratulations. You nailed it.

(BABBAGE high-fives LOVELACE.)

Becoming Number Six

STEPHANIE

Of course tell me if he's using heroin.

JULIA

And if he's banging a 13-year old?

STEPHANIE

Julia!

JULIA

What? These are legitimate questions.

STEPHANIE

Lets not deal with anything we don't have to.

JULIA

But –

STEPHANIE

Let's just see what we find. If there's nothing there, we won't have to worry about it. ... Ready?

JULIA

There's a project I need to finish. How about tonight?

STEPHANIE

Jeremy will be home.

JULIA

Maybe I can get the afternoon off. What time does he get home from school?

STEPHANIE

Usually around four.

BABBAGE

Do you suppose they're making plans?

LOVELACE

Conspiring?

BABBAGE

One person is a crank.

LOVELACE

No one is interested in cranks.

BABBAGE

Two people are a conspiracy.

LOVELACE

Conspiracy is a crime.

Becoming Number Six

JULIA

OK, I'll try and come by after lunch.

STEPHANIE

Thank you so much.

(JULIA and STEPHANIE stand and hug.)

LOVELACE

The school, tomorrow morning?

BABBAGE

I'll pick you up.

(LOVELACE and BABBAGE stand and BABBAGE exits. Lights dim except for a spotlight on LOVELACE.)

LOVELACE

Imagine a game where neither side knows the shape of the board nor the location of all the pieces. All your information comes from watching the moves your opponent makes. It's a lot of fun.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 4

(The next day.

Split stage: On one side an interrogation room, indicated by a freestanding door and a table. A microphone hangs from the ceiling. There is nothing else. JEREMY is seated at the table. He is uneasy, but not yet too worried. Next to him stand BABBAGE and LOVELACE.

On the other side is NUMBER 4's office, as in SCENE 1. NUMBER 4 is watching one of the monitors as it displays the events taking place in the interrogation room.)

BABBAGE

Tell us about Incognito.

LOVELACE

<FreshMeat>.

JEREMY

I don't know what you're talking about.

BABBAGE

You have a tattoo on your wrist –

LOVELACE

That suggests otherwise.

JEREMY

It's just a thing I read.

BABBAGE

(Lifts JEREMY's arm and reads.)

Before you become Incognito, you must first become Incognito.

LOVELACE

Coincidence?

JEREMY

Yeah.

LOVELACE

If you act, as you think –

BABBAGE

The missing link –

Becoming Number Six

Synchronicity. LOVELACE / BABBAGE (*together*)

Who are you guys? JEREMY

No one you know. BABBAGE

You're not really cops are you. JEREMY

We never said we were. BABBAGE

The school secretary said you were the police. JEREMY

A misunderstanding. LOVELACE

She said two officers – JEREMY

Oh, that. It's my given name. BABBAGE

What a coincidence. Me, too! LOVELACE

Pleased to meet you. Officer. BABBAGE

(They shake hands.)

Officer. LOVELACE

Is this a test? JEREMY

Yes. If this had been an actual emergency – BABBAGE

You would been instructed where to tune in. LOVELACE

An initiation? JEREMY

Becoming Number Six

| | |
|---|----------|
| You mean into some secret society? | BABBAGE |
| Masons? | LOVELACE |
| Skull and bones? | BABBAGE |
| Knights Templar? | LOVELACE |
| Are you Incognito? | JEREMY |
| You tell us. | BABBAGE |
| That's not how it works. | JEREMY |
| How does it work? | LOVELACE |
| I don't know. | JEREMY |
| I detect a problem of epistemology. | LOVELACE |
| I know. | BABBAGE. |
| Perhaps we can construct a coherent reality. | LOVELACE |
| Empirically? | BABBAGE |
| Ideally. (<i>To JEREMY.</i>) You want to contact Incognito. How does that work? | LOVELACE |
| Why are you asking me? Just Google it. | JEREMY |
| We want to know what you did. | LOVELACE |

Becoming Number Six

JEREMY

I went to a secure chat room.

LOVELACE

With <FreshMeat>.

JEREMY

Yes.

BABBAGE

So you struck up a conversation, just like that.

JEREMY

He didn't reply. When you message them, they try and figure out who you are. If you've kept your identity secret, they'll get back to you.

BABBAGE

And if they do figure out who you are –

LOVELACE

Jeremy.

BABBAGE

Mr. <InflatableVonnegut>.

JEREMY

Shit.

LOVELACE

Someone figured out who you are.

JEREMY

Who are you?

BABBAGE

No one you know.

JEREMY

What am I doing here?

BABBAGE

Waiting.

JEREMY

What for?

LOVELACE

Godot.

Becoming Number Six

| | |
|---|----------|
| | JEREMY |
| Why are you asking about Incognito? | |
| | BABBAGE |
| You tell us. | |
| | JEREMY |
| I thought you were Incognito. | |
| | LOVELACE |
| Maybe you hacked a government web site – | |
| | BABBAGE |
| And illegally distributed the contents of said web site – | |
| | LOVELACE |
| In knowing violation of the law. | |
| | JEREMY |
| Information wants to be free. | |
| | LOVELACE |
| What about you? | |
| <i>(A pause.)</i> | |
| | JEREMY |
| Can I leave? | |
| | BABBAGE |
| Not yet. | |
| | JEREMY |
| Why not? | |
| | LOVELACE |
| We're waiting. | |
| | JEREMY |
| For? | |
| | BABBAGE |
| Lucky. | |
| | LOVELACE |
| And Pozzo. | |
| | JEREMY |
| Do they work for you? | |

Becoming Number Six

BABBAGE

The state of education these days.

LOVELACE

Deplorable.

JEREMY

Can you tell me why I'm here?

BABBAGE

It's a question we all wrestle with.

LOVELACE

One is still what one is going to cease to be and already what one is going to become.

JEREMY

Cease to be?

BABBAGE

Bereft of life.

LOVELACE

Gone to meet his maker.

JEREMY

Are you going to kill me?

BABBAGE

The probability is very low –

LOVELACE

Through from a quantum mechanical perspective, non-zero.

(We hear a ringtone, "Derezzed" by Daft Punk. JEREMY pats his jeans.)

JEREMY

Where's my phone?

(BABBAGE pulls a plastic bag from his jacket. It contains the phone.)

BABBAGE

It's your mother.

(JEREMY opens the bag and grabs the phone. He answers. STEPHANIE is on the line. He can hear her, but she can't hear him.)

JEREMY

Mom? ... Mom, can you hear me? ... I'm OK. Mom? ... Mom!

Becoming Number Six

(The call has ended. BABBAGE takes the phone.)

LOVELACE

I believe there was some damage to the microphone.

BABBAGE

You will, of course, be fully reimbursed by the government.

LOVELACE

The check is in the mail.

JEREMY

You guys are with the government?

BABBAGE

Did we say that?

LOVELACE

It was implied.

JEREMY

Am I in trouble?

BABBAGE

Have you done anything wrong?

JEREMY

No. You brought me here for questioning.

LOVELACE

We don't really care for questions.

BABBAGE

People give answers.

LOVELACE

We prefer suspicion, --

BABBAGE

Not actually knowing.

LOVELACE

It gives us more freedom to act.

JEREMY

Am I under arrest?

BABBAGE

No. You're what we call a --

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

Person of interest.

JEREMY

So I'm here because?

LOVELACE

You're interesting.

JEREMY

Can I see your badges?

LOVELACE

Shall I?

BABBAGE

Happens every time.

LOVELACE

We don't need no stinking badges.

(They smirk.)

JEREMY

Why not?

BABBAGE

We're from a division –

LOVELACE

The Division.

JEREMY

What division?

LOVELACE

That would be telling.

JEREMY

What about my rights?

BABBAGE

Under federal law 107 slash 56 –

LOVELACE

Commonly known as the USA PATRIOT Act –

Becoming Number Six

BABBAGE

(To the audience.)

That's an acronym, by the way –

LOVELACE

(To the audience.)

Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism.

BABBAGE

(To JEREMY.)

A law, under which, certain rights may be suspended.

LOVELACE

Indefinitely.

JEREMY

Wait. You think I'm a terrorist?

BABBAGE

Thinking isn't required.

LOVELACE

Only suspicion.

JEREMY

This is crazy. I'm not a terrorist. *(Beat.)* Do I get to make a phone call?

BABBAGE

I think we've established –

LOVELACE

That's not going to be particularly effective.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE exit through the door.)

JEREMY

Hey! ... Where are you going? ... What about me?

(After a few beats, the lights dim. Spot on JEREMY.)

JEREMY

Was that document important? Maybe I'll be famous like Aaron Swartz or Chelsea Manning.

(Lights down on JEREMY. At various points during the remainder of the scene JEREMY may get up and pace and then return to the table, but he has no means of entertaining himself.)

Becoming Number Six

*BABBAGE and LOVELACE move the door so that it is now in front of
NUMBER 4's office. They knock.)*

NUMBER 4

Come in.

*(BABBAGE and LOVELACE enter. The following exchange is done at an
almost comically rapid pace.)*

BABBAGE / LOVELACE *(together)*

Number four.

NUMBER 4

Status?

BABBAGE

No contact yet with Direct Object.

LOVELACE

Subject has been contacted by Indirect Object.

BABBAGE

With additional pressure on Indirect Object –

LOVELACE

We believe Subject will attempt communication with Direct Object.

NUMBER 4

What about Target?

BABBAGE

Target is now Direct Object.

LOVELACE

There was an issue.

BABBAGE

The Commissioner requested we discontinue Target –

LOVELACE

As either subject or object in favor of Direct Object.

BABBAGE

The Subcommittee felt that Target had militaristic overtones –

LOVELACE

That Direct Object did not.

Becoming Number Six

BABBAGE

To deal with the issue --

LOVELACE

New operational manuals have been issued --

BABBAGE

That specify the use of Direct Object as the subject.

NUMBER 4

And you are holding the son of Subject to apply said pressure?

BABBAGE

The son of Indirect Object.

LOVELACE

Subject is without issue.

NUMBER 4

The son of Indirect Object.

BABBAGE

Yes.

NUMBER 4

No problem with the authorities?

LOVELACE

No.

(The conversation returns to a more normal pace.)

NUMBER 4

Excellent. Carry on.

BABBAGE / LOVELACE *(together)*

Number four.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE turn to go.)

NUMBER 4

A moment.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE turn back.)

NUMBER 4

There have been rumors circulating.

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

Always are.

NUMBER 4

What have you heard?

BABBAGE

There's talk about the budget.

LOVELACE

Restructuring.

NUMBER 4

Nothing to worry about. It's just....

(NUMBER 4 gets distracted by something on one of the screens.)

BABBAGE

Number four?

NUMBER 4

Outsourcing.

LOVELACE

SIGINT?

NUMBER 4

New sources.

LOVELACE

GCHQ? SGDN? Unit 8200?

NUMBER 4

Public sector.

BABBAGE

Someone is selling?

NUMBER 4

Someone is always selling.

LOVELACE

Facebook? Twitter? Target? *(Pronounced "Tar-ZHAY")*.

BABBAGE

Equifax? AmEx?

NUMBER 4

Everyone. There are new cross-referencing tools in the pipeline. Set aside some time for training.

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

Of course.

BABBAGE

Any time.

(They turn to leave again.)

NUMBER 4

Number Nine?

LOVELACE

Yes?

NUMBER 4

A moment. Alone.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE exchange a glance. BABBAGE exits.)

NUMBER 4

Your ears only.

LOVELACE

Cone of silence?

NUMBER 4

Funny girl.

LOVELACE

Go ahead.

NUMBER 4

You wrote a computer program.

LOVELACE

The FOIA one?

NUMBER 4

Don't miss a trick, do you Lovelace?

LOVELACE

I do my best.

NUMBER 4

Anyway, Liaison wants to deploy. Budget ran the numbers. Could save a quarter million.

LOVELACE

I don't know what to say.

Becoming Number Six

NUMBER 4

Say thank you. You'll be getting a bonus.

LOVELACE

Thank you.

NUMBER 4

You're welcome. That's all.

LOVELACE

Be seeing you.

(LOVELACE exits. NUMBER 4's attention returns to the video screens.)

END OF SCENE

SCENE 5

(Dylar living room. Empty. BABBAGE and LOVELACE ring the bell. CCTV cameras swivel. STEPHANIE answers.)

STEPHANIE

Where's my son?

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE walk past her into the room.)

BABBAGE

You're asking us?

LOVELACE

You're his mother, you should know.

STEPHANIE

You took him. His school secretary said –

BABBAGE

We did?

LOVELACE

You'd need hard evidence to prove that.

BABBAGE

Like a video recording.

LOVELACE

The school has eight cameras –

BABBAGE

On a seven day rotation.

LOVELACE

Which means you have six days –

BABBAGE

To get a subpoena.

LOVELACE

Before the data is recycled –

BABBAGE

Overwritten –

LOVELACE

Destroyed.

Becoming Number Six

You're torturing me.

STEPHANIE

Harsh.

LOVELACE

We're from the government.

BABBAGE

We're here to help.

LOVELACE

Are you saying you don't have Jeremy?

STEPHANIE

Can we speak frankly?

LOVELACE

Please!

STEPHANIE

We believe that Jeremy was in contact with some –

LOVELACE

Shall we say unsavory?

BABBAGE

Lets!

LOVELACE

Characters on the internet.

BABBAGE

Who? Who are these people?

STEPHANIE

Have you heard of a group called Incognito?

LOVELACE

They're computer hackers, right?

STEPHANIE

Worse.

LOVELACE

Criminals.

BABBAGE

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE
Not someone you'd want your son associating with.

STEPHANIE
Are you saying that someone from Incognito took Jeremy out of school?

LOVELACE
There are patterns –

BABBAGE
Patterns of behavior, –

LOVELACE
Disturbing patterns.

STEPHANIE
Do you know where he is?

BABBAGE
We need your help.

STEPHANIE
What can I do?

BABBAGE
Go through his computer and –

STEPHANIE
We did. We didn't find anything.

LOVELACE
You must go deeper.

STEPHANIE
You guys are the experts, you do it.

BABBAGE
That would require a warrant.

LOVELACE
Which might take weeks.

STEPHANIE
Look, I'll just give it to you. All right?

BABBAGE
No.

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

We need to be unbiased –

BABBAGE

With regard to any potential evidence.

STEPHANIE

Evidence of what?

BABBAGE

Besides, it might appear that you were coerced.

STEPHANIE

This isn't coercion?

BABBAGE

We advise.

LOVELACE

You consent.

STEPHANIE

Do you know where my son is?

BABBAGE

Not exactly.

LOVELACE

But we do know his velocity.

STEPHANIE

What does that mean?

LOVELACE

Heisenberg.

BABBAGE

Uncertainty principle.

STEPHANIE

Is this your job? To mess with me?

BABBAGE

You can do this.

STEPHANIE

What? What can I do?

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE
Find out who he was in contact with.

STEPHANIE
But why me?

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE rise.)

BABBAGE
We have to go.

LOVELACE
Listen very closely.

BABBAGE
Peel back the layers of the onion.

STEPHANIE
What?

LOVELACE
Do you understand?

STEPHANIE
No.

LOVELACE
But you heard what he said?

STEPHANIE
The layers of the onion.

BABBAGE
Yes.

LOVELACE
Brava!

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE go to the door and turn back to STEPHANIE before exiting.)

BABBAGE
Good luck!

STEPHANIE
Don't go.

LOVELACE
Be seeing you.

Becoming Number Six

STEPHANIE

Do you want money?

LOVELACE

This is not extortion.

BABBAGE

We're giving you useful information.

LOVELACE

Use it.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE exit. Lights down. Time passes. That evening. Lights rise on the Dylar living room. STEPHANIE and JULIA are sitting on the sofa.)

JULIA

They were right.

STEPHANIE

You found the onion?

JULIA

Not the onion, but yes. The Tor protocol --

STEPHANIE

Cybersecurity for Dummies, please.

JULIA

You know how most web sites are something dot com? Well, for various reasons, much of the dark web is dot onion.

STEPHANIE

Really? I thought computer geeks were into Dungeons & Dragons. Not vegetables.

JULIA

(Laughs.) Yeah. It's about layers, though.

STEPHANIE

So there are two webs?

JULIA

Essentially.

STEPHANIE

And the dark web is like the dark side?

Becoming Number Six

JULIA

Depends. Some people just use it for security, other parts, well, “a wretched hive of scum and villainy” is a pretty good description.

STEPHANIE

And Jeremy?

JULIA

I don’t know yet. I’ll go home and check out some of this stuff.

STEPHANIE

Please don’t go.

JULIA

I need my computer.

STEPHANIE

Use Jeremy’s.

JULIA

No.

STEPHANIE

There might be other things on it that you need.

JULIA

Yes, but –

STEPHANIE

Please. I’m all alone.

JULIA

You can call me.

STEPHANIE

I need you.

JULIA

You need Jeremy back.

STEPHANIE

I’ll cook for you. Anything you want.

JULIA

That would be nice, but –

STEPHANIE

I’ve got some really nice wine.

Becoming Number Six

JULIA

Then I wouldn't get any work done.

STEPHANIE

OK, you stay here and work, and I'll give you a massage break every half hour.

JULIA

I can't stay here.

STEPHANIE

Why not?

JULIA

Please, don't ask.

STEPHANIE

Julia?

JULIA

Don't push it, all right?

STEPHANIE

What does that mean?

JULIA

It means there are things I can't talk about.

STEPHANIE

You know something about Jeremy!

JULIA

No.

STEPHANIE

What then? Are you working with those spooks?

JULIA

I've never even seen them.

STEPHANIE

Then why won't you help me?

JULIA

I will help you, Steph. I just can't be here.

STEPHANIE

I need you.

Becoming Number Six

JULIA

Look, I can stay here and be comforting, or I can leave and be helpful.

STEPHANIE

How does leaving help me? What is it you're not telling?

JULIA

I'll do what I can. I'm sorry.

(Exits.)

STEPHANIE

Don't go. I need you.

(Runs to doorway.)

I don't have anyone else. Julia! ... Julia!

(STEPHANIE starts to cry. Lights down.)

END OF SCENE

SCENE 6

(Lights up on Dylar living room a few hours later. The table has an empty pizza box and there is a bottle of wine and two glasses. JULIA and STEPHANIE are talking.)

JULIA

I'll install a VNC client, virtual network –

STEPHANIE

You don't have to explain everything. I don't understand anyway.

JULIA

OK, but I want you to know what's going on. The program gives me access to Jeremy's laptop from my computer at home.

STEPHANIE

You can take over his laptop, just like that?

JULIA

Well, it's easy since you have it, though it can be done using a virus, too.

STEPHANIE

And you'll be able to see whatever happens on his machine?

JULIA

Yes.

STEPHANIE

OK, go ahead. *(Beat.)* And thank you for coming back. So much.

JULIA

It's OK.

STEPHANIE

How much do I owe you for the pizza?

JULIA

My treat. You opened the wine. Let me set up the software.

STEPHANIE

The laptop is in Jeremy's bedroom.

Becoming Number Six

(JULIA goes offstage to Jeremy's room. STEPHANIE tidies up the remains of the pizza dinner. JULIA returns carrying a laptop. It is connected to a small black box with an antenna.)

JULIA

Steph?

STEPHANIE

Go ahead, you don't need me to start.

JULIA

No, come here. This is important.

(STEPHANIE joins JULIA at the couch.)

STEPHANIE

What is it?

JULIA

Jeremy has a femtocell hooked up to his computer.

STEPHANIE

Is that good or bad?

JULIA

Do you like having your cell phone conversations tapped?

STEPHANIE

What? Did he build that?

(JULIA types at the computer during her next few lines.)

JULIA

No, you can them at any electronics store.

STEPHANIE

It's that simple to tap a phone?

JULIA

Normally, they act like a mini cell tower to give you better reception. But this one's been hacked to be a Stingray.

STEPHANIE

Which does what?

JULIA

Any cell phone within range will connect to this. But before the data is passed on to the phone company, but it can do almost anything.

Becoming Number Six

STEPHANIE

Listen in?

JULIA

Yes. And read texts, see photos, web connections.

STEPHANIE

Oh my god. Do you suppose Jeremy overheard something he shouldn't have, and that's why he's been taken away?

JULIA

They didn't mention this, did they?

STEPHANIE

No. But what if they're not even from the government? What if they were just lying to prevent me from going to the police?

JULIA

I thought you talked to the police?

STEPHANIE

Just over the phone.

JULIA

Hang on, hang on. Let's see what we can find out first. Maybe then we'll know what to do?

STEPHANIE

Can you see what he's been doing?

(JULIA stops typing.)

JULIA

It looks like he's cloned some phones by stealing their internal ID.

STEPHANIE

I can't believe Jeremy's done this.

JULIA

It looks like this one is yours. Should we try it?

(JULIA types a command. CELL PHONE #3 rings.)

JULIA *(To audience.)*

Excuse me, can you check the caller ID on that? It should say Stephanie Dylar.

STEPHANIE

Don't. That's creepy.

Becoming Number Six

(JULIA types, the phone stops ringing.)

JULIA

I wonder who the others are. There are six more.

STEPHANIE

I don't know if I should be worried about him breaking the law, or proud that he's a computer genius.

JULIA

Hackers trade these programs like baseball cards.

(JULIA continues to type. STEPHANIE's phone rings.)

STEPHANIE

Should I get that?

JULIA

Look at it.

(STEPHANIE pulls out her phone.)

STEPHANIE

It says it's you!

(JULIA types. The ringing stops.)

JULIA

That little bastard – sorry – he cloned mine, too.

STEPHANIE

Oh god. I'm sorry.

JULIA

Steph, I'm getting in over my head. If you want this stuff looked at, I'm going to have to bring in some people.

STEPHANIE

Who?

JULIA

It might be better if you don't know.

STEPHANIE

You say that like it's the mafia or something.

JULIA

I'll need to give them access to Jeremy's laptop.

Becoming Number Six

STEPHANIE

Do they have to come over?

JULIA

No, it will be over the internet.

STEPHANIE

(Sarcastically.) Oh well that's all right then. *(Beat.)* What are you up to Julia? Who are you?

JULIA

I'm not up to anything. I'm trying to help you out.

STEPHANIE

But what's all this "some people" crap? First those guys, then Jeremy, now you. It's creeping me out.

JULIA

Have you heard of Incognito?

STEPHANIE

You know those people?

JULIA

(To the audience.)

We watch. We are unwatchable. We cannot be counted. Count on us.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 7

(Interrogation room, the next morning. JEREMY is sleeping, head on the table. BABBAGE and LOVELACE enter.)

LOVELACE
Rise and shine.

JEREMY
Oh god.

BABBAGE
Wakey-wakey.

JEREMY
What time is it?

LOVELACE
Time to confess.

JEREMY
Is it tomorrow?

LOVELACE
Tomorrow never comes.

JEREMY
What do you want?

BABBAGE
Information.

LOVELACE
Whose side are you on?

JEREMY
What do you mean?

LOVELACE
Stolen documents.

BABBAGE
<LeakyFaucet>.

JEREMY
I don't know what you're talking about.

BABBAGE
You have a tattoo on your wrist –

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

That suggests otherwise.

BABBAGE

Before you become Incognito, you must first become Incognito.

LOVELACE

Dude --

BABBAGE

Passing classified documents can get you put away --

LOVELACE

For a long time.

JEREMY

Aren't I supposed to have a lawyer?

BABBAGE

Spoken like a criminal.

JEREMY

If you have evidence, why not just arrest me? It's like you're fishing.

BABBAGE

He's got us there, Lovelace.

LOVELACE

He does indeed, Babbage.

BABBAGE

We are fishing, --

LOVELACE

But you're the bait, --

BABBAGE

Boy.

LOVELACE

You're nothing but chum, --

BABBAGE

Chum.

JEREMY

If I'm a criminal, just arrest me.

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

Be careful what you wish for --

BABBAGE

‘Cause you just might get it.

LOVELACE

On the other hand.

BABBAGE

If you tell us a little more about <LeakyFaucet>, we might let you go.

JEREMY

I don’t know any more than what I found on the Internet.

LOVELACE

Do tell.

JEREMY

Everybody knows about Incognito.

BABBAGE

Not everyone knows about <FreshMeat>.

LOVELACE

Or <LeakyFaucet>.

BABBAGE

You know what a honey pot is, Jeremy?

LOVELACE

By the look on his face, I think he does.

BABBAGE

Maybe we shouldn’t call him Jeremy.

LOVELACE

More like Winnie-the-Pooh.

BABBAGE

That computer you hacked –

LOVELACE

Was put there to catch bears of very little brain.

JEREMY

I don’t believe you.

Becoming Number Six

BABBAGE

Denial.

LOVELACE

Next up: anger, bargaining, despair, and acceptance.

BABBAGE

Every unique login was given access to a slightly modified set of documents.

LOVELACE

Any hacker would get a version with a slightly different digital fingerprint.

BABBAGE

Believe it now?

JEREMY

You could just be lying. Trying to trick me into admitting something.

BABBAGE

Excellent idea.

LOVELACE

We'll have to try that sometime.

BABBAGE

If we wanted to make you confess, you would.

LOVELACE

(German accent.) Ve haff vayz.

BABBAGE

You're just here to trigger the next step in a larger plan.

LOVELACE

You're the marble in Mousetrap.

JEREMY

Trap who?

LOVELACE

<LeakyFaucet>.

JEREMY

I don't know who that is.

BABBAGE

We know.

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

But you're helping us catch him anyway.

BABBAGE

Incognito will be very unhappy with you.

JEREMY

I haven't said anything.

LOVELACE

You don't get it. Step back. Think of the process, not the individual.

BABBAGE

Consider what happened to those documents –

LOVELACE

That you stole.

JEREMY

You're trying to trick me.

LOVELACE

We can leave you out of it.

BABBAGE

If someone stole some documents –

LOVELACE

Hypothetically.

BABBAGE

How would Incognito get them?

JEREMY

I'm not saying anything.

BABBAGE

We're really not out to get you, Jeremy. You actually did a pretty good job –

LOVELACE

For a first-timer.

BABBAGE

And we'll forgive your little indiscretion –

LOVELACE

If you just sit tight a for a while.

Becoming Number Six

JEREMY

Do I have a choice?

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE exchange a glance.)

BABBAGE / LOVELACE *(together)*

No.

(A pause.)

JEREMY

What are you waiting for.

LOVELACE

Your mom, actually.

JEREMY

She's doesn't know anything about this.

BABBAGE

We know.

JEREMY

You guys are crazy.

BABBAGE

Your mom knows someone –

LOVELACE

Who knows someone.

BABBAGE

And as long as you're missing –

LOVELACE

That someone will try and find you.

JEREMY

You're not going to arrest her?

BABBAGE

Of course not.

LOVELACE

She's innocent.

BABBAGE

Unlike you.

Becoming Number Six

(A pause.)

JEREMY

How much longer?

BABBAGE

You're working for the wrong side, Jeremy.

LOVELACE

You've got "mad skillz," you could help the good guys.

JEREMY

Incognito is the good guys.

LOVELACE

You think DDOS attacks are a good thing?

BABBAGE

Putting Hitler moustaches on all the photos at senate.gov?

JEREMY

It's a form of protest.

LOVELACE

You've Godwin'd your own argument before it even starts.

JEREMY

I suppose kidnapping me makes you the good guys.

BABBAGE

Kidnapping is a loaded word.

LOVELACE

Think of it like detention.

BABBAGE

PATRIOT act, remember?

LOVELACE

Those documents you downloaded?

BABBAGE

Distributing classified information carries a prison term of up to ten years.

LOVELACE

Given that we're going to let you go without pressing charges –

BABBAGE

I think it's fair to say we are the good guys. ... Think about it.

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

Be seeing you.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE exit.)

END OF SCENE

SCENE 8

(Dylar living room. JULIA is working on the laptop. STEPHANIE enters with a plate of food and some juice.)

STEPHANIE

I made breakfast.

JULIA

You should get some rest.

STEPHANIE

You're the one who's been working all night. It's the least I could do.

(JULIA dives in. Continues to eat and drink during the following.)

JULIA

This is soooo good. Thank you.

STEPHANIE

What are you doing now, if it's not too technical?

JULIA

Waiting, mostly. We need to hear from <LeakyFaucet>.

STEPHANIE

Can't you just call them?

JULIA

That's not how it works. To become –

STEPHANIE

I know, I know. To become Incognito, you must first become Incognito. But you're Incognito already.

JULIA

But I don't know who <LeakyFaucet> is. No one does. That's the beauty of it.

STEPHANIE

Then how do you even contact him?

JULIA

I don't. I can only put things where he's likely to look at them, and tell him how to contact me.

STEPHANIE

So we don't even know if he'll get around to us. What if he's gone to Florida for a week?

JULIA

That's the way it is, Steph.

Becoming Number Six

STEPHANIE

Julia. I thought you were going to do something.

JULIA

I've been here all night, doing everything I can. If you don't like it...

STEPHANIE

No, no, no. Don't get mad at me.

JULIA

I know, you're frustrated. So am I.

STEPHANIE

Distract me. Talk to me. Have you done stuff like this before?

JULIA

Better you don't know.

STEPHANIE

Oh come on.

JULIA

Well, you know that time the FBI accused Pakistan of hacking the US embassy?

STEPHANIE

I didn't really follow the story.

JULIA

Well, documents proving it was the Chinese mysteriously showed up at the New York Times about a week later.

STEPHANIE

Was that you?

JULIA

I helped.

STEPHANIE

Who did you work with?

JULIA

I don't know. (*Beat.*) Incognito is sort of like a starfish.

STEPHANIE

A computer-hacking starfish?

Becoming Number Six

JULIA

A starfish doesn't have a centralized brain, it has one in each arm. When one arm finds something interesting, the other arms respond.

STEPHANIE

Don't they also regrow arms when they're cut off?

JULIA

Exactly.

STEPHANIE

Do people get ... cut off?

JULIA

God, I hope not.

(The computer chimes.)

JULIA

<LeakyFaucet>!

STEPHANIE

What does he say?

JULIA

(Typing.) Hang on. ... Yes, he received documents from <InflatableVonnegut>.

STEPHANIE

Who the hell is that?

JULIA

Jeremy, I saw that handle in his chat logs.

STEPHANIE

Can he tell us where Jeremy is?

JULIA

No. He doesn't know anything but that alias.

STEPHANIE

But can't you guys find out where he is? Hack in to some database?

JULIA

It's not that easy.

STEPHANIE

We have to find him.

Becoming Number Six

JULIA

Let's think this through. Jeremy got ahold of some top secret files, and sent them to Incognito. Babbage and Lovelace try to push you around, then pick Jeremy up at school.

STEPHANIE

Did they arrest him?

JULIA

They would have scooped up his computer as evidence.

STEPHANIE

They told me they didn't want his computer.

JULIA

That doesn't make sense.

JULIA

Were any of his friends involved? Are they looking for an accomplice?

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE appear at the door and ring the bell.)

STEPHANIE

Just a sec.

(STEPHANIE opens the door, sees who it is, and immediately slams it shut.)

STEPHANIE

It's them!

JULIA

Oh shit. Let me shut this thing down.

(JULIA starts quitting programs and shutting down the laptop. The doorbell rings again.)

STEPHANIE

Ready?

JULIA

I didn't really want to meet these guys, but go ahead.

(STEPHANIE opens the door, BABBAGE and LOVELACE enter.)

BABBAGE

Good evening, Mrs. Dylar.

Becoming Number Six

STEPHANIE

Where's Jeremy?

LOVELACE

Good evening, <TinkerTailor>.

(JULIA is shocked by the use of her handle, but doesn't speak. She's staring at LOVELACE.)

BABBAGE

He'll be home soon.

LOVELACE

Cat got your tongue, <TinkerTailor>?

STEPHANIE

Why are you calling me that?

LOVELACE

Not you. Your friend.

BABBAGE

A small matter of paperwork.

LOVELACE

She's not quite as incognito as she used to be.

STEPHANIE

Is he all right?

BABBAGE

Perfectly safe.

JULIA

I know you from somewhere.

STEPHANIE

Where is he?

LOVELACE

Maybe we shop at the same Whole Foods.

BABBAGE

You need to sign a form.

STEPHANIE

What form?

Becoming Number Six

BABBAGE

Acknowledging that we brought in Jeremy for questioning and you have been informed.

STEPHANIE

Why should I sign that?

BABBAGE

Once you've done so, we release him.

STEPHANIE

Let me see.

LOVELACE

Wait a minute...

(BABBAGE hands STEPHANIE a document and a pen.)

JULIA

Oh, fuck. Oh, fuck.

STEPHANIE

What's wrong?

JULIA

You're <RainbowGirl84>.

LOVELACE

Oh, god.

BABBAGE

Lovelace?

LOVELACE

<NerdyButCute>?

JULIA

Body type: athletic. Zodiac: Gemini. Really good at: working with my hands.

LOVELACE

You're her!

JULIA

You said you were a social worker!

BABBAGE

You two have met?

LOVELACE / JULIA *(together)*

OKCupid.

Becoming Number Six

STEPHANIE
How do you know it's her?

JULIA / LOVELACE (*together*)
Profile picture.

BABBAGE
You're a lesbian?

LOVELACE
Is that a problem?

BABBAGE
No. It's just, I never ...

STEPHANIE
Wait. So you two were on-line dating?

JULIA
We were only at the email stage.

(STEPHANIE signs the form and gives it to BABBAGE.)

STEPHANIE
Here. Now where's my son?

BABBAGE
He'll be freed the minute this has been processed.

LOVELACE
And thanks for your help.

STEPHANIE
With what?

LOVELACE
You contacted <LeakyFaucet>.

JULIA
Damn it.

BABBAGE
He's being detained as we speak.

JULIA
This is all my fault.

BABBAGE
Jeremy broke the law.

Becoming Number Six

STEPHANIE

Are you arresting her?

BABBAGE

Should we?

LOVELACE

We are aware that <TinkerTailor> frequently uses encryption.

BABBAGE

That is not against the law.

LOVELACE

At the present time.

BABBAGE

But we don't know the content of those messages.

LOVELACE

We're analysts. We look for patterns, --

BABBAGE

Patterns of behavior, --

LOVELACE

Disturbing patterns.

JULIA

That's bullshit. You clearly were intercepting our messages just now. You tapped Jeremy's computer.

BABBAGE

No.

LOVELACE

Wiretapping is illegal.

BABBAGE

And we wouldn't do anything illegal.

LOVELACE

Theoretically.

JULIA

I don't believe you.

LOVELACE

Triangulation.

Becoming Number Six

Causality.

BABBAGE

X is unknown.

LOVELACE

A and B are known.

BABBAGE

A contacts X. X contacts B.

LOVELACE

The intersection of all parties in contact with both A and B in time frame T yields X.

BABBAGE

Q.E.D.

LOVELACE

But --

JULIA

Metadata.

LOVELACE

Nothing else?

JULIA

A metric butt-load of computers.

BABBAGE

Perfectly legal.

LOVELACE

Smith v. Maryland. 1979.

BABBAGE

What are you talking about?

STEPHANIE

How to spy legally.

JULIA

We're not spies.

BABBAGE

We're analysts.

LOVELACE

Becoming Number Six

BABBAGE

Patterns can be very revealing.

JULIA

I don't believe this.

BABBAGE

We don't want to delay Jeremy's return. Thank you again, Mrs. Dylar.

LOVELACE

<TinkerTailor>.

STEPHANIE

He'll be home soon?

BABBAGE

We'll process the form.

LOVELACE

Be seeing you.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE go to the door, LOVELACE stops and turns back for a moment.)

LOVELACE

Would <NerdyButCute> consider coffee with <RainbowGirl84>?

(JULIA flips off LOVELACE. LOVELACE shrugs and turns to leave with BABBAGE. As they exit, we hear.)

BABBAGE

<RainbowGirl84>?

LOVELACE

Shut up.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 9

(Split stage: BABBAGE and LOVELACE are at the coffee shop. The other side is the DYLAN living room, where STEPHANIE and JULIA are seated, and drinking a glass of wine. STEPHANIE is on her cell phone. JEREMY's laptop is nearby)

STEPHANIE

See you soon, honey. I love you.

(Puts away her phone.)

He said he's on his way.

JULIA

Good.

STEPHANIE

I am so relieved this is over.

JULIA

What are you going to do?

STEPHANIE

I don't know yet. Go out for ice cream, maybe.

JULIA

(Pointing to laptop.)

I meant about this.

STEPHANIE

I'll think about that later. I just want to have my baby home.

JULIA

Just so you know, I deleted all the clones.

STEPHANIE

The what?

JULIA

On his computer. The cell phones?

STEPHANIE

Good. You can take that damn box, too, as far as I'm concerned.

JULIA

I think getting rid of that is a good idea.

STEPHANIE

You'll celebrate with us?

Becoming Number Six

JULIA

I don't think so. I feel like going home.

STEPHANIE

Please?

JULIA

<TinkerTailor> is dead, Steph. All the work I've put into creating a trusted Incognito persona – it's lost.

STEPHANIE

Can't you create a new identity?

JULIA

One, it's not that simple, and two, you know that Division is going to be keeping an eye on me.

STEPHANIE

You could volunteer for the ACLU or something.

JULIA

This is what I do. It feels more important than my real job.

STEPHANIE

Really?

JULIA

How long have you been at Madison? What if they said you couldn't teach anymore?

STEPHANIE

That's different. That's about the kids.

JULIA

And this is about freedom. The first amendment.

STEPHANIE

I'm just not used to thinking of you as a hacker.

BABBAGE

I can't believe you almost dated that hacker.

LOVELACE

How was I to know?

BABBAGE

No, you're right. It's just hilarious, that's all.

LOVELACE

You don't need to blab it to everyone.

Becoming Number Six

BABBAGE

Blab? Moi?

LOVELACE

You know what I mean.

BABBAGE

Seriously, it's not an issue, right? I mean you're not ... I mean, you're out, right?

LOVELACE

I'm not in or out.

BABBAGE

What does that mean?

LOVELACE

It means I don't define myself by any single attribute: sexuality, hobby, occupation, whatever.

BABBAGE

Mac or PC?

LOVELACE

I'll never tell.

BABBAGE

Oh come on, everyone knows you're Linux.

LOVELACE

At work, maybe, but what do I use at home?

BABBAGE

Does HR know?

LOVELACE

Mac or PC?

BABBAGE

Gay or straight.

LOVELACE

Of course.

BABBAGE

Do they ask?

LOVELACE

They can't.

Becoming Number Six

BABBAGE

Theoretically.

LOVELACE

Legally.

BABBAGE

But?

LOVELACE

They don't ask, but when you're up for a security clearance, they interview your spouse, significant other, whoever.

BABBAGE

Oh yeah. I remember that.

LOVELACE

Why?

BABBAGE

They asked about a previous girlfriend. This yoga instructor.

LOVELACE

I don't want to know.

BABBAGE

Just don't be surprised if someone calls you RainbowGirl in the cafeteria.

LOVELACE

Just don't be surprised if you die a horrible death.

BABBAGE

It would be so worth it.

LOVELACE

I hope you like Polonium in your sushi.

BABBAGE

Whatever you say, RainbowGirl.

LOVELACE

Fuck my life.

(BABBAGE and LOVELACE exit. JEREMY arrives and enters the Dylar house. STEPHANIE jumps up and runs to hug him.)

STEPHANIE

Jeremy!

Becoming Number Six

JEREMY

Hi mom.

(The embrace until JEREMY gets uncomfortable and breaks loose.)

JEREMY

It's OK, mom. Nothing happened.

STEPHANIE

Nothing! You were gone for two days.

JEREMY

It was barely twenty-four hours.

JULIA

Hi, Jeremy.

JEREMY

Hi. ... Plus I have to go back tomorrow.

STEPHANIE

Oh no!

JEREMY

They're not going to do anything. I have to watch a video or something.

STEPHANIE

I'm coming along.

JEREMY

I don't know if they'll let you. They're sending a car.

STEPHANIE

A car?

JEREMY

You have to wear a blindfold so you don't see where you're going.

STEPHANIE

Ugh. This is creeping me out.

JULIA

Jeremy. I want to apologize, for breaking into your computer.

JEREMY

No. I get it. ... Is that why they let me go?

JULIA

Not exactly.

Becoming Number Six

STEPHANIE

Can we do all the tech stuff later. I want to do something normal. Want to go out for ice cream?

JEREMY

Sure.

JULIA

There's more. What you did – what we did – got someone arrested.

JEREMY

What? Who?

JULIA

<LeakyFaucet>.

JEREMY

Fuck!

STEPHANIE

Language!

JULIA

If it's any consolation, it's partially my fault.

JEREMY

What did you do?

JULIA

I used your computer. I should have gone home and done things right.

STEPHANIE

That's my fault.

JEREMY

Wait, you're Incognito?

JULIA

Was, anyway.

JEREMY

But you're old.

STEPHANIE

Jeremy!

JULIA

Thanks a lot, kid.

Becoming Number Six

JEREMY

Sorry. But I thought –

JULIA

That only cool kids were hackers? There are people in the community who still remember punch cards.

JEREMY

What's that?

STEPHANIE

C'mon guys. Enough of this, I've been cooped up in his house for too long.

JULIA

You guys go. I'm gonna head home.

(JULIA picks up the femtocell and disconnects from the laptop.)

JEREMY

Hey! What are you doing?

STEPHANIE

I gave it to her. I don't want that thing in the house.

JEREMY

Mom! That cost me ninety bucks.

STEPHANIE

I mean it.

JULIA

Do you know how much it would have cost to bail you out of jail if you'd been arrested?

JEREMY

You're not taking my computer are you?

JULIA

No.

STEPHANIE

But you're not going to use it for anything foolish. Right? ... Right?

JEREMY

Yeah, mom.

STEPHANIE

I mean it. No more of this Incognito stuff.

Becoming Number Six

JULIA

Your handle is burned anyway, Mr. Vonnegut.

JEREMY

What?

JULIA

<LeakyFaucet>. They took him down, remember.

JEREMY

Shit.

STEPHANIE

Jeremy!

(JULIA hugs STEPHANIE.)

JULIA

You guys have fun, OK?

STEPHANIE

Sure you won't come?

JULIA

Not this time. Sorry.

STEPHANIE

Thank you for everything. You were such a help.

JULIA

Yeah. Take care. ... Bye, Jeremy.

JEREMY

Bye.

(JULIA exits the Dylar house. The CCTV camera scan and pans. JULIA sits at the coffee shop table with a coffee. LOVELACE reappears and speaks to the audience.)

LOVELACE

You know that feeling when you've just finished a match with a great opponent and you immediately want to start another?

(LOVELACE approaches JULIA's table.)

LOVELACE

Do you mind if sit down?

Becoming Number Six

JULIA

Yes.

(LOVELACE sits anyway.)

LOVELACE

I was hoping you'd be here.

JULIA

Bullshit. You knew I'd be here.

LOVELACE

No, actually.

JULIA

Tracking my cell phone?

LOVELACE

I'm not. Of course, I can't speak for anyone else.

JULIA

I told you, I have no interest in re-establishing contact. As a matter of fact, I deleted my OKCupid profile.

LOVELACE

I know.

JULIA

Of course you do.

LOVELACE

That's not why I'm here.

JULIA

Where's your doppelganger?

LOVELACE

Working, I presume.

JULIA

I thought you two were joined at the hip.

LOVELACE

We work for the same organization, that's all.

JULIA

So you're not going to arrest me?

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

Just the opposite. I came here to tell you not to give up. To get back in the game.

JULIA

What game?

LOVELACE

Incognito.

JULIA

How stupid do you think I am?

LOVELACE

Not stupid at all. You're damn good.

JULIA

I don't want to quit. I have never wanted anything less in my life. I have to quit.

LOVELACE

<TinkerTailor> is dead. You, however, can start over.

JULIA

Are you kidding me?

LOVELACE

No. You weren't even on our radar until Jeremy cloned your cell. You hid yourself well.

JULIA

Good to know, I guess.

LOVELACE

Incognito needs people like you. People who are serious about freedom. Serious about the internet.

JULIA

What are you saying?

LOVELACE

You know as well as I do that most of what Incognito does is random. Sure, any script-kiddie can cause some damage, create some lulz, but they have no philosophy, they haven't thought things through. They're just cowboys.

JULIA

That should make you happy. More likely to make amateur mistakes, the way Jeremy did.

LOVELACE

But it does little to advance the cause.

Becoming Number Six

JULIA

God, I can't believe I used his machine.

LOVELACE

Do you understand what I'm saying?

JULIA

What's it to you? Not challenging enough to scare the crap out of teenagers? You want bigger prey?

LOVELACE

I want you to succeed.

JULIA

You've got to be kidding me. If you're so interested in what Incognito can accomplish, why don't you quit your job.

LOVELACE

How do you know I'm not working from the inside?

JULIA

You want me to believe that?

LOVELACE

Anyone who says they're Incognito is Incognito.

JULIA

Convenient.

LOVELACE

I don't expect you to trust me –

JULIA

I don't.

LOVELACE

Or even believe me. All I'm saying is, don't give up.

JULIA

You know too much.

LOVELACE

It will be harder. You won't be able to work from home. You'd have to use public networks, virtual machines, relays, VPNs. Encrypt everything.

JULIA

I have no reason to listen to you. No reason to trust you.

Becoming Number Six

LOVELACE

You have no reason to trust anyone. That's why you never meet face-to-face. That's why you use secure chat instead of web sites. Anyone can be compromised at any time.

JULIA

Are you saying you're a double agent?

LOVELACE

That would be illegal.

JULIA

And you'd never confess to a crime.

LOVELACE

Would you?

(A pause.)

JULIA

OK, you've said your piece. Now leave me alone.

(After a pause, LOVELACE stands to leave.)

LOVELACE

Be seeing you.

(LOVELACE exits. JULIA is left alone. After a pause, she stands and walks to the seat in the audience where she began the play.)

JULIA

Someone needs to be watching them. Will you do it if I can't?

END OF SCENE

SCENE 10

(The next day. NUMBER 4 and JEREMY in NUMBER 4's office. Each of the monitors displays scrolling lists of information.)

NUMBER 4

And our latest facility has over one hundred forty thousand servers, each with multiple cores. Over a million CPUs at a single site.

JEREMY

Intense.

NUMBER 4

If you worked for us this summer, you'd have access to all that compute power.

JEREMY

You want to run `girls.py` (*pronounced "girls dot pie"*) in your data center?

NUMBER 4

We're not going to run the current version of your program. But we think you could make some changes that would be interesting. You'd be helping fight terrorism.

JEREMY

How does my program do that?

NUMBER 4

Do you know how many people travel through airports every day?

JEREMY

No.

NUMBER 4

Nearly one hundred fifty thousand at JFK, and over two hundred thousand at Heathrow.

JEREMY

You take pictures of everybody?

NUMBER 4

Homeland Security does.

JEREMY

Isn't that spying?

NUMBER 4

Airports are public spaces.

JEREMY

How does `girls.py` help?

Becoming Number Six

NUMBER 4

What we want to do is match everyone who goes through the airports.

JEREMY

You've got a lot of computers, you should be able to do that already.

NUMBER 4

If it were only two airports, yes. But if we include every major airport and make the time frame two weeks, that's too many people, too much work, even for the new data center.

JEREMY

But my program just separates girls' pictures from boys'.

NUMBER 4

By analyzing features, correct?

JEREMY

It scans a photo to find the face, then takes some measurements. Since girls have slender eyebrows and chins, it can make a pretty good guess from that.

NUMBER 4

I'm sure you could modify it so that it picked out, for example, men with dark hair and beards instead of girls.

JEREMY

Yeah, I could do that.

NUMBER 4

That kind of change would simplify our analysis by an order of magnitude. How much would you like to make?

JEREMY

What do you mean?

NUMBER 4

What kind of salary are you looking for?

JEREMY

I don't know.

NUMBER 4

Our tech people get paid in the low six figures.

JEREMY

No way.

Becoming Number Six

NUMBER 4

In addition to paying you a salary, when you go to college in the fall, we could switch you to part-time, and pay your tuition as well.

JEREMY

And you wouldn't use my code to spy on anyone?

NUMBER 4

Despite what you think, we aren't spies. All the data we process is legal.

JEREMY

You spied on me.

NUMBER 4

No, you illegally accessed a government computer, which triggered a software alarm. We could have arrested you that day, but we were more interested in shutting down <LeakyFaucet>.

JEREMY

You said you weren't going to press charges.

NUMBER 4

We're not. You'll need a security clearance to work for us, and you couldn't do that with a felony hacking conviction.

(Pause.)

We're offering you a great job doing the kind of work you love. What will it take to convince you?

JEREMY

I'm interested. It just feels weird. Incognito always said the government was the enemy.

NUMBER 4

You're part of the government, Jeremy.

JEREMY

You mean I will be, if I work for you.

NUMBER 4

No, I mean right now. It's in the Constitution, "we the people." We elect the representatives, decide to approve or disapprove taxes, construct highways, establish fire departments. If that's the enemy, then every friend and neighbor you have is the enemy. I don't think that's the right way to look at the world.

(JEREMY speaks to the audience.)

JEREMY

What if I never get a chance like this again? I can always quit, if I don't like it, right?

Becoming Number Six

(Back to NUMBER 4.)

JEREMY

I should probably talk to my mom.

NUMBER 4

Of course. I'll have one of our staff brief you on what you can and can not reveal.

(NUMBER 4's cell phone rings. He answers)

NUMBER 4

Number Four. ... Yes. Hold on a moment.

(To JEREMY.)

This is a private call, wait here, please.

JEREMY

Sure.

(NUMBER 4 leaves the room. JEREMY wanders around for a time, then sits at the desk. He looks around to see if anyone is watching. He tentatively punches a few keys.

The screens change to network diagrams. He types some more. The display switches to the pictures of the people in the audience from the opening scene. JEREMY watches. He types again. The middle screen switches to a porn video. He settles in to watch all three, as NUMBER 4 had done in SCENE 1.)

END OF SCENE

(As the audience leaves, CCTV cameras placed near the exits pan, zoom, and make unobtrusive sounds.)

END OF PLAY

GLOSSARY

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| CIA (acronym) | Central Intelligence Agency |
| DCS (acronym) | Defense Clandestine Service |
| DIA (acronym) | Defense Intelligence Agency |
| EFF (acronym) | Electronic Frontier Foundation |
| FBI (acronym) | Federal Bureau of Investigation |
| FOIA (acronym) | Freedom Of Information Act |
| GCHQ (acronym) | UK version of NSA (<i>Government Communication Headquarters</i>) |
| HUMINT (<i>HYOOM-int</i>) | Human intelligence, i.e., that gathered by field agents |
| JIO (acronym) | Joint Intelligence Office |
| NSA (acronym) | National Security Agency |
| SGDN (acronym) | French security agency (<i>Secrétariat Général de la Défense et de la sécurité Nationale</i>) |
| SIGINT (<i>SIG-int</i>) | Signals intelligence, i.e., that gathered by electronic monitoring |
| Tor (<i>tor</i>) | A web browser which anonymizes the user |
| PGP (<i>acronym</i>) | A program that encodes/encrypts data on your computer |
| Unit 8200 | Israeli version of NSA (<i>Yehida Shmoneh-Matayim</i>) |

VITA

The author grew up in Helena, Montana and obtained his Bachelor's degree in Computer Science from Montana State University in 1979. After over two decades in computer industry in the San Francisco Bay Area, he developed an interest in writing. He became a company member and writer for Playground San Francisco, which honored him with their Emerging Playwright Award in 2006. After independent study with Amy Freed, Ben Yalom, Bill Cain, Anthony Clarvoe, and Lauren Gunderson, he joined the Creative Writing Workshop in 2012 to pursue studies in Playwriting with Justin Maxwell, both at the New Orleans campus and at CWW workshops abroad program in Cork, Ireland. He has had two pieces of short fiction published, some photography, and three plays. He is also the author of two books on computer technology.